

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 DPW-01 RSR-01 /069 W

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O 300052 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2332

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9477

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT DAILY MR 3 SITREP - MAY 28, 1973

FOLLOWING MSG REC FROM AMRNNSUL BIEN HOA ON MAY 28 ACTION
EMBASSY SAIGBF REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 0153

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: DAILY MR 3 SITREP - MAY 28, 1973

1. AT MR 3 CG' S WEEKLY BRIEFING THIS MORNING, LTG MINH TOLD CONGEN THAT HE HAD INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRESIDENT THIEU TO PREPARE FOR " REAL CEASE- FIRE" JUNE 4. ALL HIS TROOPS ARE ON FULL ALERT. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS. OTHER MR 3 PROVINCE CHIEFS HAVEZOLD CONGEN OFFICERS THE SAME THING, APPARENTLY FOLLOWING A MAY 25 BRIEFING IN BIEN HOA OF MR 3 STAFF, DIVISION CGS, AND PROVINCE CHIEFS BY A JGS OFFICER.

2. MILITARY ACTIVITY INCREASED SLIGHTLY OVER THE THREE- DAY PERIOD ENDING 0800 HOURS WEI MAY. THERE WERE 50 INCIDENTS CONSISTING OF 22 ATTACKS BY FIRE, 14 GROUND ATTACKS, 1 SERIOUS AIR INCIDENT AND 13 MINE/ BOOBY TRAP INCIDENTS. CASUALTIES FOR THE PERIOD WERE 22 RVNAF KILLED AND 36 WOUNDED, WHILE KNOWNHJC/ NVA LOSSES WERE 11
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KILLED AND 1 WOUNDED.

3. SHELLING OF TONLE CHAM BASE CAMP CONTINUED UNABATED.
COMMUNISTS FIRED APPROXIMATELY 400 ROUNDS OF MIXED MORTAR AND

ARTILLERY INTO THE CAMP WOUNDING 3 RANGERS, 1 SERIOUSLY. A GRBHND ATTACK BY PLATOON SIZE COMMUNIST FORKZ ON THE RANGER ELEMENT GUARDING THE BRIDGE 500 METERS EAST OF THE CAMP WAS DRIVEN OFF WITHOUT RANGER LOSSES. LOUDSPEAKERS AGAIN URGED THE CAMP TO SURRENDER AND THE COMMANDER WAS INVITED TO DISCUSS SURRENDER TERMS WITH HIS COUNTERPART BY RADIO AT A GIVEN TIME ON A STATED FREQUENCY.

4. HEAVY FIGHTING HAS BROKEN OUT NEAR PHU GIAO, BINH DUONG PROVINCE. DURING AFTERNOON MAY 25 VNAF HELICOPTER WAS SHOT DOWN 3 KM WEST OF PHU GIAO DISTRICT TOWN, WHILE ON VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE IN AREA RECENTLY INFILTRATED BY LARGE VC/ NVA FORCE. HELICOPTER

CRASH KILLED CO OF 7 TH REGIMENT, 5 TH ARVN INFANTRY DIVISION, ALONG WITH 11 OTHER REGIMENTAL STAFF AND CREW MEMBERS ABOARD. DURNNG MORNING OF MAY 26, UNKNOWN SIZE VC/ NVA FORCE ATTACKED ELEMENT OF 9 TH REGIMENT OF ARVN 5 TH 10 KM SW OF PHU GIAO. ARVN LOSSES WERE FOUR KIA, TWO WIA, ONE MIA, AND FOUR 2 1/2 TON TRUCKS, ONE 155 MM HOWITZER, ONE M 70 GRENADE LAUNCHER, SIX M-16 S, AND ONE M60 HEAVY MACHINE GUN DESTROYED. VC/ NVA LOSSES NOT REPORTED. ICCS V CANDEL TOLD US THIS MORNING THAT GVN HAS SUBMITTED COMPLAINT ON HELICOPTER SHOOT- DOWN, AND MR 3 CG LTG MINH TOLD CONGEN THAT IN RETALIATION FOR IT HE HAD ALREADY FIRED 1,000 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY AND CONDUCTED " MASSIVE" AIR STRIKES INTO AREA FROM WHICH FIRING CAME. HE CLAIMED 22 COMMUNISTS KBA, AND CAPTURE OF 75 MM RECOILLESS RIFLE AND OTHER WEAPONS, AND HE SAID RETALIATION WOULD CONTINUE. MEANWHILE, ARVN CONVOY RESUPPLY OF PHUOC BINH - SONG BE AREA IN PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FROM PHU GIAO JUNE 1 HAS BEEN POSTPONED AND WE HAVE EARLY REPORT THAT COMMUNIST FORCES HAVE CUT BRIDGE ON INTERPROVINCIAL ROUTE 1- A BELOW PHU GIAO.

5. BIEN HOA PROVINCE CHIEF REPORTS THAT SAIGON- XOAN LOC TRAIN WAS MINED MORNING MAY 27 NEAR TRANG BOM VILLAGE, DUC TU DISTRICT. ICCS BEN CAT TEAM IS INVESTIGATING THIS MORNING.

6. AT CONGEN' S REGULAR MONDAY BRIEFING OF CANADIAN AND INDONESIAN ICCS V DELEGATION CHIEFS, FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED:
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A. CANDEL SAID CANADIANS WOULD AGREE TO INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED

US OVERFLIGHT OF XA MAT ONLY IF PRG ABIDES BY PROPER PROCEDURES, NOTABLY INCLUDING FULL PARTICIPATION OF GVN LIAISON OFFICER.
(NOT CLEAR WHETHER PRG HAS FORMALLY REQUESTED INVESTIGATION.)

B. CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS HAVE REQUESTED RULING FROM CENTRAL ICCS MILITARY COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIBILITY OF INTERVIEWS WITH NVA POWS CAPTURED SINCE CEASE- FIRE, SUCH AS TWO INTERVIEWS VIDEOTAPED LAST WEEK.

HOWEVER, IF ICCS REFUSED TO ACCEPT SUCH INTERVIEWS AS EVIDENCE OF NVA INFILTRATION, CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS RETAIN OPTION OF SUBMITTING THEM AS NATIONAL VIEWS.

C. REPORT ON INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED US BOMBING IN LOC NINH

WENT FORWARD TO SAIGON OVER THE WEEKEND. INDODEL CONFIRMED SPECIFICALLY THAT IT WAS A 2-2 SPLIT, AND CANDEL ADDED THAT POLES EVEN REFUSED TO SIGN COVERING LETTER DRAFTED BY CANDEL AS WEEKLY CHAIRMAN BECAUSE IT REFERRED TO PRG REFUSAL TO LET GVN LIAISON OFFICER ACCOMPANY INVESTIGATION AS VIOLATION OF ICCS PROTOCOL.

D. INDODEL, WHO ACCOMPANIED INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR DHARSONO ON HIS TRIP TO CU CHI LAST WEEK, CATEGORICALLY DENIED REPORT (CARRIED IN OUR MAY 25 SITREP) THAT DRIVER OF ARVN 2 1/2 TON TRUCK WHICH HAD TRIED TO BREAK INTO AMBASSADOR'S CONVOY HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY GVN AUTHORITIES AND FOUND TO BE NVA NONCOM. INDODEL SAID TRAFFIC ON ROAD TO CU CHI WAS DISTINGUISHED BY NOTHING MORE THAN USUAL ROTTEN ARVN TRUCK DRIVER TRAFFIC MANNERS, BUT HE AND AMBASSADOR NEVER FELT IN ANY PARTICULAR DANGER.

E. CANDEL SAID THAT HUNGDEL REGION V CHIEF COPMM VARGA IS INTELLIGENT MAN AND GENTLEMAN WHO COUCHES HIS OBSTRUCTIONISM IN LOGICAL PHRASES (OTHER CANADIANS HAVE ALSO EXPRESSED PERSONAL RESPECT FOR HUNGDEL CHIEF) WHILE POLDEL V CHIEF COL. STEMPFEL IS "A STUPID MAN WHO SIMPLY SAYS NO."

F. CONSTANT TRANSFERS OF POLISH DELEGATES WITHIN AND BETWEEN TRUCE REGIONS HAVE REACHED NEW HEIGHTS. CANDEL SAID THERE WERE ABOUT 25 POLES AT REGION V HQ OVER THE WEEKEND AND POLDEL V CHIEF WAS SHARING HIS DOUBLE BED WITH ONE OF FOUR LIEUTENANT COLONELS IN TOWN, PRESUMABLY "LISTENING TO HIS DREAMS."

7. ON EVE OF EXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT ON WHETHER CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN ICCS WILL CONTINUE, SPECULATION IS RIFE HERE AMONG ICCS DELEGATIONS AND ICCS-WATCHERS. CANDEL CHARACTERIZED AMBASSADOR GAUVIN'S RECENT WALKOUT FROM CENTRAL ICCS MEETING OVER PROCEDURAL CONFIDENTIAL

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POINT AS INDICATION OF "BREAKDOWN OF ICCS," AND HE THOUGHT THAT RECENT CANADIAN DECISION TO INCREASE ALLOWANCES OF THEIR ICCS PERSONNEL WAS FURTHER SIGN THAT CANADIANS WOULD NOT REMAIN, BECAUSE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT HAVE INCREASED ALLOWANCE IF IT THOUGHT IT WOULD ACTUALLY HAVE TO PAY IT.

8. WE HAVE GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT SOME SENIOR CANDELS HAVE BECOME FASCINATED WITH WORK OF ICCS AND WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE. CANADIAN POLICY OF FIRST TWO MONTHS, WHICH INVOLVED ABANDONMENT OF LEGITIMATE POINTS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE UNANIMITY, WAS EXTREMELY FRUSTRATING TO THEM, BUT IN PAST TWO MONTHS THEIR REFUSAL TO COMPROMISE ON IMPORTANT PROCEDURAL OR SUBSTANTIVE POINTS AND THEIR PRESSURE ON COMMUNISTS EITHER TO COOPERATE OR TO TAKE FULL BLAME FOR FAILURE OF ICCS HAS SEEMED TO MAKE THEM FEEL BETTER ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING.

9. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THIS HARD-LINE POLICY HAS LED TO POLARIZATION OF ICCS V BOTH IN ITS WORK AND IN PERSONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN COMMUNISTS AND NON-COMMUNISTS. CANADIANS ARE PRINCIPAL PURVEYORS OF POLISH JOKES, WHICH HAVE UNDERGONE REMARKABLE RENAISSANCE HERE IN RECENT MONTHS. BAD PERSONAL RELATIONS AMONG CU CHI DELEGATIONS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE. AND WHEN HUNGDELS APPROACHED CANDEL

IN BIEN HOA CLUB SATURDAY NIGHT TO SAY, " WE HEAR YOU" RE LEAVING,"
CANDEL BOUGHT THEM THREE DRINKS AND THEN TOLD THEM WHAT TO DO IN
THE MOST EXTREME OBSCENITY. WE FEEL THAT THIS ENCOUNTER GRAPHICALLY
ILLUSTRATES STATE OF RELATIONS OF ICCS V AT X PLUS 120.

WALKINSHAW

WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON09477
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730560/abqcehqg.tel
Line Count: 170
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Aug-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <10-Oct-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980306
Subject: SUBJECT DAILY MR 3 SITREP - MAY 28, 1973
TAGS: PINS, MILI, PINT
To: STATE INFO JEC PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005